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VIDEO: DFO investigates alleged illegal dump of herring in Deep Bay

Herring fisherman says dump is normal practice

Scott Stanfield

Mar 24, 2021 10:30 AM

Updated Mar 24, 2021 11:54 AM



A conservation group says a boat illegally dumped a load of herring in Deep Bay, but a career commercial herring fisherman says the alleged dump is par for the course.

On March 19, Conservancy Hornby Island responded to an anonymous tip that a commercial fishing vessel had dumped its load of herring after the packing vessel refused the catch, covering the sea floor beside the government dock in Deep Bay.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) said it is investigating the alleged dumping incident.

Locky MacLean of Conservancy Hornby Island says the incident is further evidence that the herring fishery is "wasteful and unsustainable," and needs to be shut down.

"Possibly the fish were either spawned out or they were too young, and the roe not large enough for the market," CHI chair Grant Scott said in a news release. "It is wasteful to the marine environment

and the fishing industry itself.”

According to herring fisherman Thomas Sewid, however, the number of dead fish is a normal accumulation due to fishers cleaning boats, and from seiners cleaning their nets at the dock, which is a loading zone where boats do their cleaning.

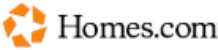
“My opinions are unbiased. I’m coming from a commercial fishing background, from a DFO background (his father is a retired DFO biological technician)...so I’m protecting the environment,” said Sewid, who is the president of Pacific Balance Marine Management. “The science is in. They predicted 20 per cent of the biomass they were allowed to catch; 111,000 tonnes so far has been recorded that have come to the Gulf of Georgia. So in fact, they took far less than 20 per cent of the biomass in the Gulf of Georgia. It’s a sustainable fishery. We should be proud of the federal department of Fisheries and Oceans.”

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Since the investigation is ongoing, DFO says it does not have specific details to share at this time.

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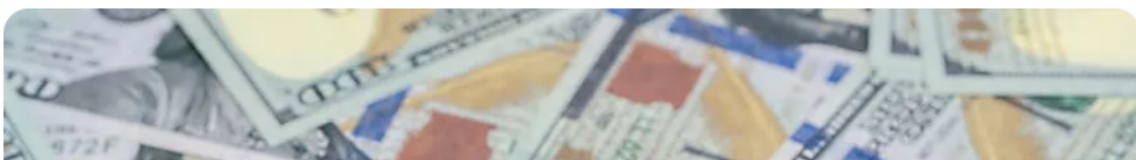
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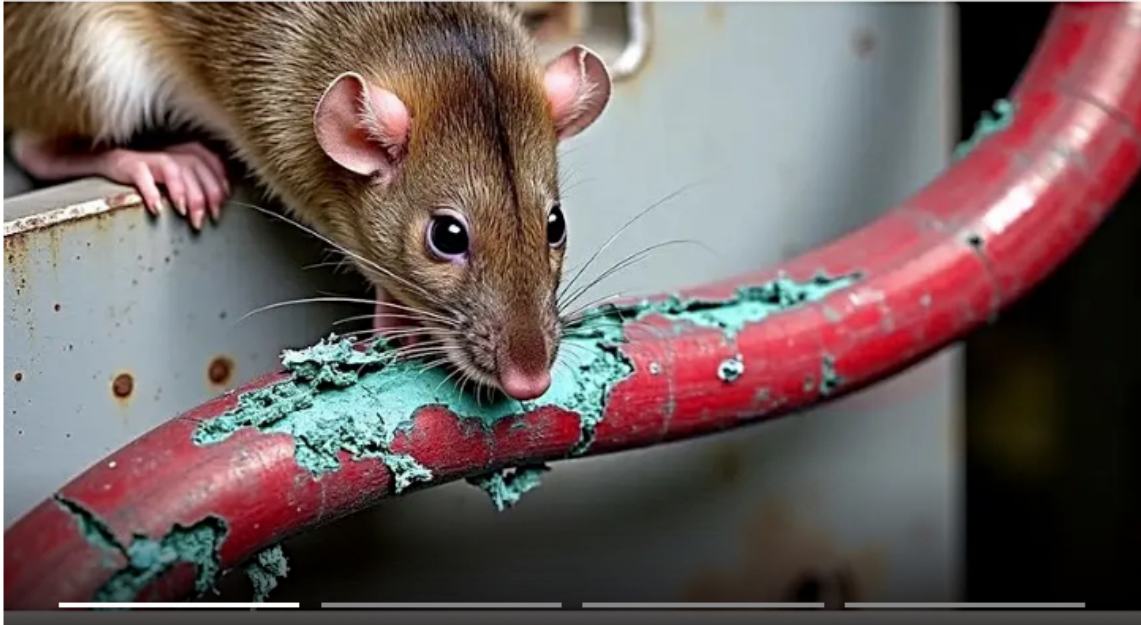
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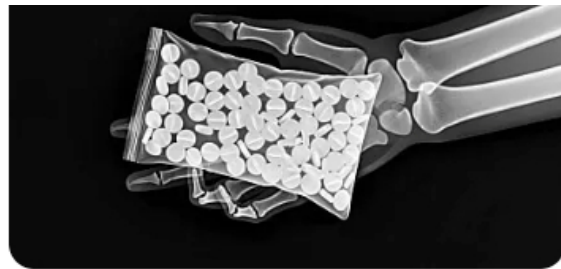
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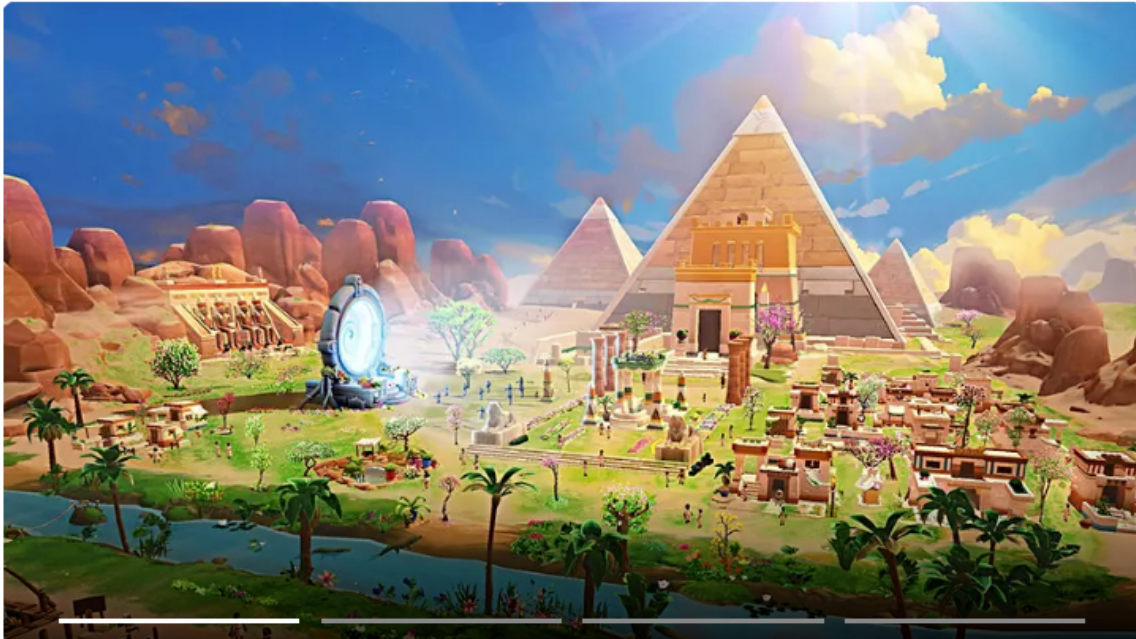
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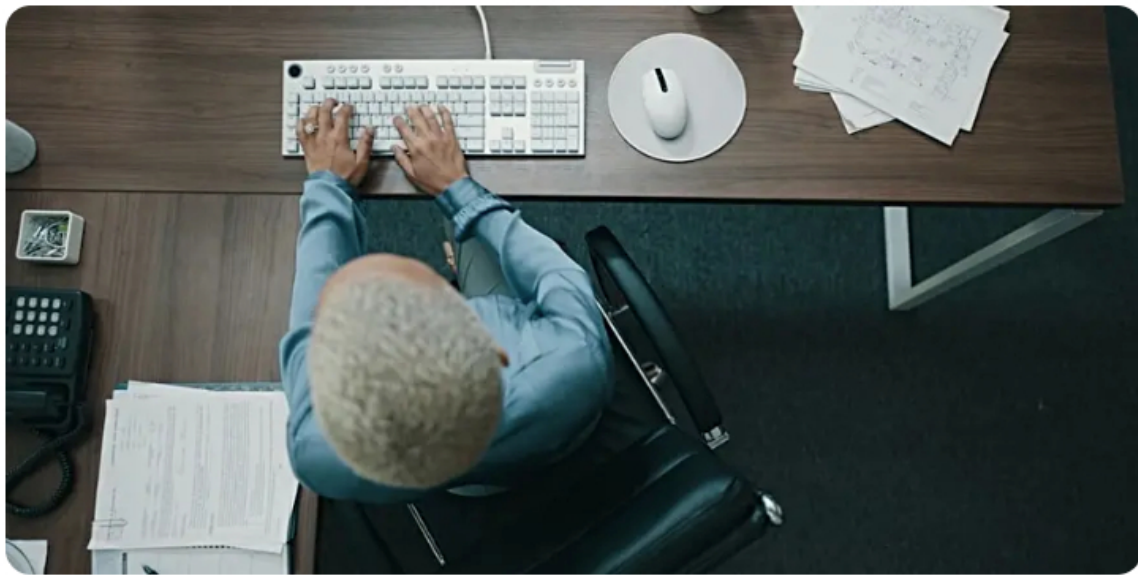
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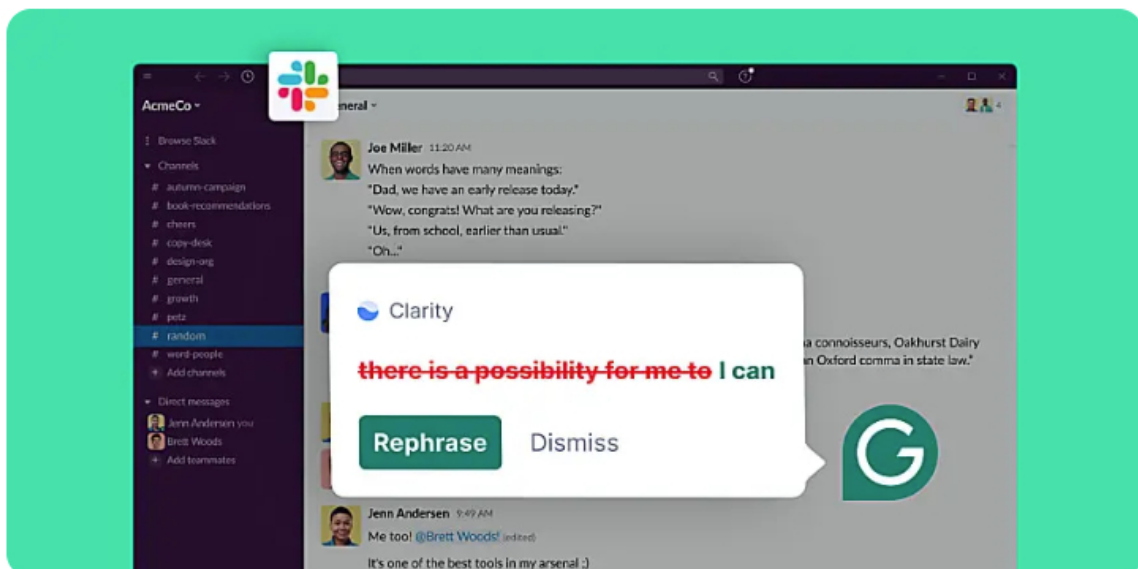
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